

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

November 18, 2019

Mr. Peter T. Gaynor  
Acting Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C Street Southwest  
Washington, DC 20004

Mr. Jeff Byard  
Associate Administrator  
Office of Response and Recovery, Federal Emergency Manage Agency  
500 C Street Southwest  
Washington, DC 20004

Mr. Peter T. Gaynor and Mr. Jeff Byard,

As Members of the Missouri Congressional Delegation, we write to respectfully inquire about the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) implementation of Section 1232 of the *Disaster Recovery Reform Act (DRRA) of 2018*. As you know, Section 1232 of *DRRA* states that the Administrator of FEMA "shall give greater consideration to severe local impact or recent multiple disasters" when making recommendations to the President of the United States regarding a major disaster declaration.

On May 20, 2019, the State of Missouri received a Major Presidential Disaster Declaration (DR-4435) for flooding that occurred March 11 to April 16, 2019. Immediately following this flooding period, a severe weather event began on April 29, 2019, impacting counties across the state with tornadoes, high winds, flooding, and flash flooding. On May 21, 2019, Individual Assistance was denied for the all of the counties that requested assistance under DR-4435: Andrew, Atchison, Buchanan, Holt, and Platte. Following this denial, the Missouri State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) sent a formal letter to appeal the decision. The appeal was not granted. A second Major Presidential Disaster Declaration (DR-4451) was approved on July 9, 2019 for flooding that occurred during the period of April 29, 2019 to July 5, 2019. The following Missouri counties were denied Individual Assistance under DR-4451: Adair, Barton, Cape Girardeau, Christian, Clark, Cooper, Dallas, Douglas, Gasconade, Grundy, Harrison, Hickory, Howard, Laclede, Macon, Marion, Polk, St. Genevieve, and St. Louis counties.

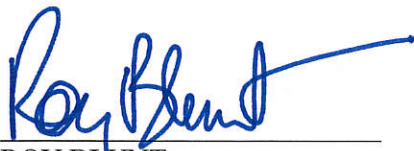
The severity and magnitude of the flooding caused communities to be evacuated and has resulted in the destruction of homes, farms, and businesses. In northwest Missouri, some individuals and families have been unable to return to their homes since March due to persistent floodwaters. The state and local governments continue to be burdened by the costs that have been incurred in the ongoing effort to protect life and property.

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With these difficulties in mind, we ask for FEMA to provide detailed information into how “greater consideration to severe local impact or recent multiple disasters” in accordance with Section 1232 of *DRRA* is objectively defined and measured. Furthermore, we ask you to provide specifics into how Section 1232 of *DRRA* has been implemented. It is our understanding that you distributed a guidance on May 1, 2019 to regional counterparts on how to describe localized impacts. What is the mechanism used to administer this guidance and what information is included in such a guidance? How does FEMA ensure that there is no discrepancy between how regional divisions execute this guidance?

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



ROY BLUNT  
United States Senator



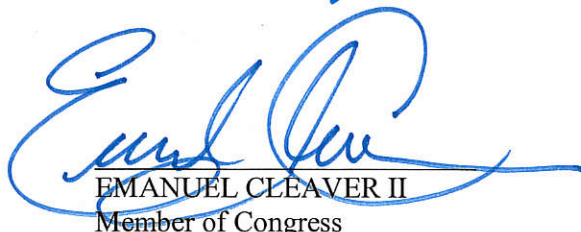
SAM GRAVES  
Member of Congress



JOSH HAWLEY  
United States Senator



WM. LACY CLAY  
Member of Congress



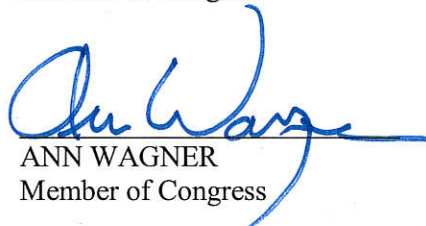
EMANUEL CLEAVER II  
Member of Congress



VICKY HARTZLER  
Member of Congress



BILLY LONG  
Member of Congress



ANN WAGNER  
Member of Congress



BLAINE LUETKEMEYER  
Member of Congress



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Member of Congress